

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

Claim 1 is currently being canceled.

Claims 2, 4, 8, 11-17, 19-21, 34-36, 38 and 39 are currently being amended.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment and reply cancels and amends claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After canceling and amending the claims as set forth above, claims 2-5, 8-24, 34-36 and 38-40 are now pending in this application.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter made in the Office Action with respect to claims 38 and 39. By way of this amendment and reply, claims 38 and 39 have each been placed in independent form to include the features of their base claim and any intervening claims. Thus, claims 38 and 39, as well as the other claims pending in this application which now depend either directly or indirectly from claim 38, are now in allowable form based on the indications made in the Office Action.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1-5, 8-10, 12, 14-18, 20-24, 34-36 and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,198,394 to Jacobsen et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,833,603 to Kovacs et al.; and claims 11, 13 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jacobsen et al. and Kovacs et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,759,010 to Lewis. Due to the cancellation of claim 1, and due to the changed dependencies of claims 2, 4, 8, 11-17, 19-21 and 34-36 so that all of the remaining claims under rejection depend either directly or indirectly from claim 38 (which has been placed in independent form), these rejections are now moot.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorize payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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